



Testimony in Support of  
LD 1449 Resolve, Requiring the Commissioner of Administrative and Financial Services to  
Conduct a Study of the State's Grant, Contracting and Procurement Practices

April 16, 2025

Marpheen Chann  
Portland, Maine  
Khmer Maine  
Cumberland and York Counties

Senator Baldacci, Rep. Salisbury, and members of the committee,

My name is Marpheen Chann, and I serve as the Executive Director of Khmer Maine, a nonprofit organization that supports Cambodian Americans and Southeast Asian families across southern Maine. I also serve as project lead for an exciting and historic effort: building Maine's first Asian American Community Center.

I'm here today to express strong support for LD 1449. As Maine continues its post-pandemic recovery while preparing for looming federal funding cuts and freezes, it's more important than ever that the State, the business sector, and nonprofits work in partnership to meet the moment.

We often hear about the importance of small businesses as economic engines. The same should be said of small nonprofits and community-based organizations like Khmer Maine. We are trusted messengers, cultural navigators, and on-the-ground problem-solvers—especially in underserved and historically marginalized communities. We fill in the gaps, extend the reach of state agencies, and often provide culturally responsive services that larger systems aren't equipped to deliver on their own.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Khmer Maine quickly pivoted from cultural programming to direct response. As a subcontractor of the Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition, we delivered care packages with essential food and supplies, and helped our community members navigate vaccine access and other public health resources.

Today, we're proud to be a direct grantee through the Maine Permanent Commission on the Status of Racial, Indigenous, and Tribal Populations—but we're still relatively new to navigating

the state's complex reimbursement model. Like many small organizations, we face challenges with upfront costs, cash flow, and administrative capacity.

That's why LD 1449 is so important. It offers a path toward more equitable and accessible state grantmaking, contracting, and procurement practices—practices that recognize and support the vital role of grassroots organizations.

We want to be part of the solution. We want to keep showing up for our communities. But we need systems that don't leave the smallest organizations behind.

I respectfully urge the committee to vote in favor of LD 1449 and help build a stronger, more inclusive Maine.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued commitment to Maine's communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marpheen Chann', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Marpheen Chann  
Executive Director, Khmer Maine